

AMID SNOW AND ICE.

PEARY'S ADVENTURES IN GREENLAND'S FARTHEST NORTH.

The Marvelous Thirteen-Hundred-Mile Trip Made by Two Men—Musk Ox Steaks and Broiled Snow Birds.

Peary is again speeding to the frozen north to continue his explorations of the mysterious polar coasts. Formerly it was the polar seas that tempted daring men to risk their lives in bewildering arctic journeys, now in ships, now in sledges or on foot, sometimes in channels between drifting ice floes piled mountain high. Peary is the pioneer in a new field, the discoverer of a new method of polar research. After countless ships had been caught and held fast in ice or had foundered and been abandoned—their occupants often held prisoners under hardships beyond human strength to endure—and the phrase "sailing in polar seas" was only another term for "stuck in arctic ice," Peary hit upon the idea of overland exploration or journeys upon inland snowfields. Sailing ships penetrated to the southern limits, as supposed, of the polar sea skirted the coasts of Greenland, the navigators never losing sight of her steep, icy bluffs and always returning with the certainty that arctic Greenland was no less mysterious than the Arctic ocean, no less inaccessible, also, and no less dangerous for exploration. That was because they looked at it from the ocean level or the icefields floating on the sea.

All arctic voyagers accepted without question the notion that long-distance traveling in the high altitudes of interior Greenland was a physical impossibility; that the abrupt cliffs and piled-up rocks, the glaciers, with their gigantic ice walls and yawning fissures as seen from the sounds lying between the seventy-ninth and eighty-fourth parallels, would repulse all land expeditions, or if the interior should once be gained it would present difficulties equal to if not greater than those of the terrible coast. To this idea Peary said "No," and he proved his view by a reconnaissance half-way across the island in the seventieth parallel, in 1886. He found that beyond the broken fissure-ice of the bluffs there was an extensive plateau covered with level snow, and he reasoned that if Greenland reaches to the pole, as the voyagers declared, Greenland might be the true path to the pole; that if there is an open polar sea it might wash the northern shores of Greenland and could be discovered by the land route.

Up to the time of starting on the inland trip in April, 1892, there was nothing to distinguish it from scores that had gone before. The steamer Kite landed the party on the shores of McCormick bay, Smith's sound, just below the seventy-eighth parallel, in the summer of 1891. Peary's leg was broken by the tiller of the ship as she struggled through the ice to make the harbor, but he insisted on going ashore and wintering there, in order to get seasoned for the arctic journey. The real start began May 15, 1892. On that day Peary, with three companions, four sledges and sixteen dogs, stood upon the long white slope of interior Greenland, 4000 feet above the sea, and set their faces northward. They found that the red earth was buried out of sight by a great shield or cap of ice, and that the ice was coated with a hard firm crust of snow. On this they made progress at the rate of fifteen to twenty miles a day, when not held back by storms. Their refuge during a storm from the driving snow and keen, cutting wind was a snow hut. From this one of the party was always excluded to act as watchman over the dogs. The animals were unharnessed and secured to stakes driven in the snow, and during a storm, in the absence of their masters, would howl and fight and tear themselves loose. As voracious as wolves—for that is really what they are—they would devour their harness, the fur sleeping-bags of the explorers, and everything in the way of provisions that was in reach unless it was secured in heavy tin cans.

The party, small as it was, was subdivided at Humboldt glacier, 130 miles from the winter camp. Two were to return to camp leaving Lieutenant Peary and Eivind Astrup, an educated Norwegian, to explore the mysterious and icy north alone. There were no words said at that handshaking. The two who had been detailed to go back stood in silent awe while their companions turned their teams northward and began that perilous journey which might lead to fame and might also terminate in one of those arctic tragedies too horrible to contemplate.

Peary and Astrup took along 13 dogs with two sledges. It was the very first time that Eskimo dogs had been used by explorers on inland ice. There were no advance caches for extra supplies, and the party took the chances of subsisting on the food that was borne along on the sledges. They also went without tents of any kind for shelter. All in all of the plight of those two men, once separated from the comrades, should they get stormbound or meet with accidents ordinarily to be expected in untried paths, would be hopeless in the extreme.

Soon after rising the northern slope of Humboldt glacier the snow was

(Continued on Fourth Page.)

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